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in Russia statute legislation is but a crust superimposed upon a structure of folk-law, which presents wide discrepancies in different parts of the Empire. The system of communal ownership, for example, which is traditional with forty millions of the Czar's subjects, is not prescribed but only tolerated by the Imperial Code, and may be discarded by a given community with the concurrence of two thirds of its members. We may add that the popular impression regarding the corruption of the judicial administration and of all departments of the Russian civil service seems to be confirmed by this observer. The other topic of special interest here discussed is the extent to which the Russian people has been intrusted with self-government by the present ruler. The exact functions assigned to the local assemblies and the questionable results of the present partial experiments are set forth at length. We can only note that neither Mr. Wallace nor M. Leroy-Beaulieu considers Russia yet ripe for a parliamentary system. Such are some of the questions suggested by the study of New Russia, and we repeat that to these the present volume supplies the only adequate answers attainable in the English language.

2. — *Joan: A Tale.* By RHODA BROUGHTON, author of "Cometh up as a Flower," etc. New York: D. Appleton & Co. pp. 216.

IF we had not the Earl of Beaconsfield's word for it, we might infer from the works of certain female novelists that the social atmosphere of England is not free from a certain taint of animalism. We suppose, for instance, that the irrepressible person who signs herself "Ouida" never got anything but animadversion from the censors of the press, yet she goes on writing, and very nice people continue to buy her books. This could hardly be the case if the principles and motives which in her books shape the relations of men and women were honestly believed to be a libel on society. In her case it seems clear that the reviewer is more strait-laced than the public to which he ministers, and that the English middle-class is not at heart indisposed to accept notions of life which we should think neither rational nor wholesome. There is another author, who belongs to what ought to be described as the fleshly school, but who, we are told on the covers of her last novel, is with one exception the most popular writer of fiction of her sex. It would be unfair to ignore the positive merits which Miss Broughton's books obviously possess, although it may be doubted whether these fully account for her success. She has, for instance, a few types of character, which do duty in all her stories, but which are sufficiently clear-cut conceptions; and she has the art of making a figure winning without endowing it with

too much perfection, or perhaps we should say that she shares with the author of "Guy Livingstone" the art of making a figure winning in spite of too many imperfections. Her dialogue, too, is brisk and sometimes witty, and her style for the most part crisp and unconventional. A plot she cannot construct, but this is a point in which most English novelists are weak as compared with the French, and it may be said of Miss Broughton's situations and incidents, that they are adapted skilfully enough to the evolution of character, and are sufficiently connected for her purpose, which is not dramatic, like Charles Reade's, but biographical, like Thackeray's. In all these respects, however, Hardy's books are much superior; must be placed, indeed, on a very different plane as works of art, yet it is certain that they do not find so many readers. We cannot but think that the remarkable vogue which the writings of Lawrence, "Ouida," and Miss Broughton have had in England attests a certain obliquity of the public taste, which of course is promptly disavowed when the source of the pungent flavor characteristic of those productions is pointed out. Good people are said to be mildly curious about the lives and thoughts of persons whose acquaintance they do not court, and there is no doubt that the authors we have named contrive in a more or less overt way to satisfy that curiosity. A stock character, for example, in Miss Broughton's books, and one therefore, we must presume, in which the interest of her readers is unflagging, is the athletic, good-looking, well-mannered young man, good-natured, but thoroughly selfish and indolent, whose one purpose in life is the gratification of the appetites, and whose only creed is a misty recognition of certain gentlemanlike modes of doing it,—the sort of hero, in short, who, if he happens to hold a commission in a regiment stationed in a provincial town, is spoken of by the young women of the neighborhood as "delightfully naughty." Having brought this stereotyped favorite on the stage, the author is careful to inform us what species of attractiveness the "captain" or "colonel" most values in the other sex, and to invest one or more of her heroines with the requisite attributes. In her latest novel, "Joan," the rock of offence to the masculine intellect, but loadstone to the feminine affections, is a "colonel," who thus naïvely explains to one young lady how he came to marry another woman. "You know," he tells her, "the sort of power that she always had over me,—the domination over all that is base in me,—before I well knew it, honor, that is godfather to half the dishonorable actions in the world, had manacled me for life." We are not left in doubt as to the specific fascinations of the successful candidate. Her name is Lalage, which in a sober moment the "colonel" admits conveys the idea of a "tipsy, demoralized Bacchic," and she has "taken that earliest step toward a man's

esteem and affection, — she is plump." Moreover, she has eyes "moderate in size, narrow in shape, but brimful of a cold, quick devilry; a merry, bold red mouth; a face which through sheer gaudiness of hue and splendor of animal life drives you into hotter commendation than you often give to more real loveliness." The novelist never tires of depicting the unspiritual nature of Miss Lalage's attractions, and presently returns to the theme after this fashion: "She is the only *décolleté* woman in the room, but then probably no other woman in the room has such a bust to exhibit. What a neck it is! What a great deal of it! What a smooth sea of pearl! What shoulders! What arms, — absolutely unclothed but for the two tiny shoulder-straps which alone hinder her garment from entirely taking French leave." It is obvious that this is not the way in which a writer would depict mere animal comeliness, unless he meant the reader to rate it very highly, and unless he meant to give it a potent rôle in his story. The truth is, that physical attractiveness of a somewhat coarse sort is an almost inseparable adjunct of those heroines who in Miss Broughton's books achieve the chief end of woman, a desirable marriage. The lesson is not only left for inference, but is now and then explicitly inculcated, that the secret of feminine charm is a more or less adroit appeal to the least lofty and wholesome passions of human nature. In a word, the characteristic flavor of this author's work would vanish if her view of the normal relation existing between the sexes in society should on a sudden become somewhat etherealized. We need not say that it is quite possible to depict discreditable facts in very different colors without warping or soiling the moral purity of the most sensitive reader. The *Madame Bovary*, for instance, of Gustave Flaubert is more effective than most sermons which avowedly rebuke a violation of the Seventh Commandment, and it is plain enough that the career of Becky Sharp throws no glamour over vice. It was probably his wary, discreet portrayal of Mrs. Rawdon Crawley's experiences which Thackeray had in mind when he dwelt with satisfaction on the thought that he had never written a line or a word which his young daughters might not read.

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3. — *First Principles of Political Economy, with reference to Statesmanship and the Progress of Civilization.* By Professor W. D. WILSON, of the Cornell University. Philadelphia: Henry Carey Baird & Co. Ithaca: Finch and Hagar. 1877.

IF every professor of Political Economy in every educational institution in the country is to write a book, the subject bids fair to be thor-

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